

## CHAPTER NO

### FORMAL FUNCTION VERSUS THEMATIC CONTENT: MOZART'S RONDO IN D, K. 485

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In this chapter, I present some aspects of my research into the field of musical form, with special emphasis on the high-classical period. For that purpose, I have chosen to analyze a complete composition, Mozart's Rondo for Piano in D, K. 485, a work that occupies a unique position within the composer's oeuvre, because almost all of its melodic-motivic material is derived from its initial ideas. The piece thus raises a major question for the theory of musical form: to what extent does the "thematic content" of a work determine its formal organization? Limitations of space prevent me from raising all of the issues associated with this topic, but I hope, at least, to present some idea of where I stand on the matter.<sup>1</sup>

Let us begin with a very simplistic notion of how ordinary listeners might perceive the form of a musical work, say, a single movement from some instrumental cycle, such as a sonata or symphony. Such listeners would probably be able to identify a series of musical ideas, defined largely by their melodic and motivic content, but also by their general character, texture, and rhythmical activity. These ideas, which are typically termed "themes," can then be labeled in some way, either numbered by their order of appearance (theme 1, theme 2, theme 3, etc.) or, even more typically, by alphabetical letters, as seen in Figure 1, Leon Plantinga's chart of the exposition section of Beethoven's Eroica Symphony.<sup>2</sup> Such a series of thematic ideas can impart a sense of larger-scale form when we identify certain recurring patterns. For example, the *a-b-a* scheme shown at the opening of the movement suggests a kind of ternary form.

And if Plantinga had continued the chart, he would have presented later in the movement a similar succession of letters from *a* to *i*, whose return would have articulated an overall recapitulation, to match the sequence shown in the exposition. Such an approach suggests a one-to-one correspondence between content and form, so that our recognizing the succession of melodic-motivic ideas is tantamount to our discerning the formal shape created by those ideas.

But further considerations quickly lead us to challenge this simplistic relation of content to form. If we want to understand form as an expression of some fundamental notions related to our experience of musical time, then we need to take the concept of *formal function* into account. As I have discussed elsewhere in my writings, we sense that a musical work projects multi-layered successions of “something beginning,” “something being in the middle,” and “something ending.” In addition, we recognize that some passages project the sense of “before-the-beginning” and “after-the-end.” Moreover, all of these temporal functions can be embed recursively within the entire structural hierarchy of the work.<sup>3</sup> Most theories of musical form identify to some degree or another how specific musical passages can express these temporal realities. And the labels that are given in this respect can be said to reflect their formal function. Thus at a low level in the hierarchy, for example, the two functions of *antecedent* and *consequent*, represent the notions of beginning and ending respectively of the theme-type we traditionally call the *period*. At a more middle-ground level, such as the exposition section of sonata form, the *transition* can be seen to have a medial function relative to the *main theme*, which initiates the section, and the *subordinate-theme group*, which concludes it. And at the highest level of sonata form, the *exposition* itself is a large-scale beginning, the *development*, a middle, and the *recapitulation*, an end.

Given this rudimentary notion of formal functions, we must now ask just how thematic content, as defined primarily by the melodic-motivic ideas of the work and the pattern of their succession, relates to formal functionality. The topic is complex, but we can surely accept what Carl Dahlhaus alerted us to many decades ago, namely, that a letter scheme based on thematic content requires careful interpretation about form.<sup>4</sup> Consider the thematic ideas labeled *a* and *b* in Figure 1. On first appearance, we would probably assume that the first *a* represents the beginning of the form. But what is the function of the second *a* at

m. 37? Is it, following a medial *b*, a “return” that signals the end of a ternary structure? Or is this second *a* another initiation, one that follows a closed binary scheme consisting of the first *a* as beginning and the *b* as ending? As well, how are we to understand the *a*’ that appears at m. 109? Is this another beginning, is it a return, or is it something else altogether? Finally, what are we to make of the rest of the letters, those from “c” to “i,” which are left without any particular functional implications? Our inability to give ready answers to these many questions reveals that identifying similarity of thematic content alone does not necessarily yield a reading of the true form-functional situation.

With this general introduction to the problem, let me state up front my own position, one that stands in striking contrast to most other accounts. For my investigations into classical form have convinced me that *thematic content, especially in its melodic-motivic dimension, does not play a significant role in the articulation of formal functionality*. I refer especially to melody and motive when speaking of this minimal role for thematic content, because, as I will amply demonstrate in the analysis that follows, the harmonic dimension and the grouping structures associated the various themes of a work do emerge as major determinants of formal function. Undoubtedly, my discounting the role of melodic-motivic content may seem controversial, and, as my recently published exchange with James Hepokoski attests, my rather strict view may not be readily accepted by many theorists working on musical form today.<sup>5</sup> Nonetheless, I hope that my discussion of the Mozart Rondo will clearly reveal that even in the absence of significant melodic-motivic differentiation among the themes, we can clearly discern the various functional components of the form.

But before proceeding directly to my analysis, let me quickly clarify a matter of terminology that might otherwise cause confusion in the rest of this chapter. Following the tradition of Arnold Schoenberg and his student Erwin Ratz,<sup>6</sup> upon whose theories of formal functionality I have based my own approach,<sup>7</sup> I will be identifying the various middle-ground regions of form by our difficult term “theme.” In particular, I speak of a *main theme* and a *subordinate theme* (thus translating the German terms *Hauptsatz* and *Seitensatz* respectively), and I refer as well to the transition and the component parts of the development section and the coda as *thematic units*. In so doing, I mean much more than the melodic-motivic component. Rather, my concept of theme embraces

the complete musical content of a passage, one that is minimally eight bars long, but which may well stretch to more than thirty bars. Such a theme consists of multiple phrases having their own form-functional expression, the final one of which normally brings cadential closure for the theme.<sup>8</sup> Since the specific analysis that follows will use theme in the way just described, I will normally speak of *melodic-motivic material* when referring to what most traditional theories of form identify as a “theme” or “thematic content.”

Let us turn now to Mozart’s Rondo, a single-movement work that, despite its title and overall character, is actually written in sonata form.<sup>9</sup> What is “rondo-like” about the piece, and indeed, most un-Mozartean about it, is the constant return of the materials of the main theme to form the melodic-motivic basis of practically every formal unit of the work.<sup>10</sup> We will start by examining the opening eight bars. This music is not entirely new, for Mozart had not only borrowed many elements of it from the general piano style of J. C. Bach, but he composed the same theme for use in the sonata-rondo finale of the Piano Quartet in G minor, K. 478, written just shortly before our Rondo.<sup>11</sup> In the quartet, this music appears in the exposition in D major as the first of several subordinate themes. Curiously, the theme occurs only once in the movement, because Mozart deletes it when modifying the subordinate-theme group in the recapitulation. So it is tempting to conjecture that Mozart may have regretted never having had a chance to show what could be done with the theme and thus made up for this lost opportunity by writing a piano work in which it returns again and again.

These speculations aside, the opening eight bars are formed as an almost perfect exemplar of the *sentence*, a theme-type first identified by Schoenberg early in the twentieth century. The sentence begins with a two-measure *basic idea*, which is then immediately repeated in such a way as to prolong the opening tonic harmony. Together, the basic idea, its repetition, and the underlying tonic prolongation constitute what I term *presentation* function. Such a presentation creates a powerful sense of formal initiation, one that demands a subsequent *continuation*, a function projected foremost by a reduction in the size of the groups—a process I call *fragmentation*. This results in a new one-bar idea, which itself is repeated in m. 6. The next bar brings further fragmentation when the units are again reduced by half. Additional characteristics of continuation function are an acceleration of the harmonic rhythm

and shorter durational values. Sequential harmonies are also typical of continuation function. Although not found here, prominent sequencing occurs in many of the continuational passages later in the piece. The parametric instability created by the continuation arouses powerful expectations for thematic closure, which is fulfilled by a *cadential* formal function, here, the quick half cadence on the downbeat of m. 8.<sup>12</sup>

Looking ahead to what happens next in the Rondo, we see that Mozart takes advantage of the weak closure of the half cadence to repeat the entire sentence, this time ending it strongly with a perfect authentic cadence in m. 16. He thus creates a higher-level *period*, whose first sentence functions as an *antecedent*; the second, as a *consequent*. Together, these sixteen bars constitute the entire *main theme* of the exposition. Note that in the consequent, the cadential function begins with the predominant  $\text{II}^6$  right at the start of m. 15, continues with the dominant, and closes with tonic on the downbeat of m. 16. Unlike the antecedent, there is no obvious fragmentation in m. 15. As a result, that bar groups quite readily with m. 16 to create a two-bar cadential unit. We see, therefore, that the cadential function of the consequent increases in scope in relation to the antecedent, a situation that is typical of periodic forms. This variability in the size of the cadential function will become an especially important factor to observe as we follow the course of the theme when it reappears throughout the Rondo.

Having examined the basic structure of the sentence theme-type, with its three functional components—presentation, continuation, and cadential—we can now trace how the materials of the opening sentence reappear throughout the piece to create a large-scale sonata form. To do so, I need to discuss another important theoretical concept, also first introduced by Schoenberg; namely, the difference between *tight-knit* and *loose* formal organization, a distinction I have developed extensively in my own writings.<sup>13</sup> As a rule, classical movements begin with their most tight-knit structure and then proceed to loosen the form in various ways. Figure 2 summarizes some of the factors that help project this distinction, such as the relatedness of the tonal regions, the relative stability or instability of the harmonic progressions, the degree of cadential closure or non-closure (as the case may be), the relative symmetry of the grouping structures, the extent of motivic uniformity or diversity, and the conventionality of the overall thematic design. That the sixteen-bar main theme is highly tight-knit is evident by its residing

in the home key, by its emphasis on tonic harmonies in root position, by its perfect authentic cadential closure, by its highly symmetrical grouping structure, and by the conventionality of its thematic type, namely, a period, itself made up of two sentences.

The next thematic unit significantly loosens the form. The transition of the exposition starts at m. 17 with a new two-bar basic idea, indeed, the only other significant melodic–motivic idea to appear in the piece outside of the main theme. The repetition of this idea within a prolongation of tonic harmony creates presentation function. We now expect a continuation to fragment the grouping structure and to impart a greater sense of mobility. What happens next, however, is somewhat of a surprise, for Mozart brings back, at m. 21, a variant of the main theme’s basic idea, which he then repeats. Does this two-fold statement create a new presentation? Not really, for a closer look at the harmonies reveals something quite different: the idea is now supported by VI<sup>6</sup>, which descends sequentially to V<sup>6</sup>; the idea thus functions as a *model*, which is repeated as a *sequence*. Given that the harmonies are significantly destabilized, we can understand that mm. 21–24 function as a continuation, one that logically follows upon the prior presentation. But since fragmentation is thus far missing, Mozart extends the continuation by the fragments in mm. 25 and 26, which also see a modulation to the subordinate key of A major.

What then appears, starting at m. 27, is what Erwin Ratz calls a *standing on the dominant* which normally follows a half cadence and expresses the temporal sense of “after-the-end.”<sup>14</sup> But we must ask, just where is the cadential function that would actually end the ongoing sentential structure? Curiously, the final dominant appears first at m. 26, yet this moment does not seem to project a sense of cadence at all. Instead, the harmony seems to get “stuck” on V in mid-stream, and the music then moves directly to the standing on the dominant. I call this technique of cadential avoidance a *dominant arrival*, to distinguish it from a genuine half cadence.<sup>15</sup> Indeed, if Mozart had wanted to write a real cadence, it would have been easy to do so, as my reconstruction of these bars, in Figure 3, clearly shows. The lack of genuine cadential closure thus renders the transition considerably loose in formal expression, a quality that is reinforced by the modulating tonal plan and the asymmetrical grouping structure.

The way is now prepared for the entrance of the subordinate theme. In a move reminiscent of Haydn's "monothematic" expositions, Mozart brings back materials from the main theme and shapes them again into a sentence: the basic idea of mm. 36 and 37 is repeated to make a presentation; the continuation sees fragmentation into one-bar units, and a cadential progression prepares the way for a perfect authentic cadence. Though similar in content to the main theme, this sentence is markedly looser. In the first place, the repeat of the basic idea an octave higher than expected creates a striking registral disjunction. Moreover, the bass line supporting the repetition ascends to the third scale-degree at m. 39 to support a chromatic  $\text{VII}_3^4$  of II. Harmonic instability increases when the music shifts at m. 41 to the minor mode, and the pre-dominant Italian-sixth continues to project a more chromatic, and thus looser, harmonic context than that found in the main theme. Finally, I spoke about the potential for cadential closure, but in fact, the expected cadence is *evaded*, such that the downbeat of m. 43 functions exclusively as a new beginning, not an end.<sup>16</sup>

And what begins is another sentential structure, opening with a presentation in mm. 43–46 (which shifts the basic idea into the left-hand), followed by a continuation in mm. 47 and 48. These latter bars also see the beginning of the cadential progression, so we can speak of a *fusion* of functions here and see that the continuation "becomes" cadential, as symbolized by the arrow in the annotation.<sup>17</sup> The cadential progression is then enormously expanded when the pre-dominant IV leads to the chromatic  $\text{VII}^7$  of V in mm. 49 and 50, and then to dominant harmony, with its six-four embellishment. Such an *expanded cadential progression* (ECP) is a hallmark of subordinate-theme function and serves to build up strong expectations for the arrival on tonic, here, at m. 53.<sup>18</sup>

The resulting perfect authentic cadence closes both the local sentence and the entire subordinate theme, which we now understand to consist of two parts, each sentential in design. Due to the harmonic chromaticism, the extended asymmetrical grouping structure, and the cadential evasion and expansion, the subordinate theme as a whole is rendered extremely loose. The various cadential manipulations, in particular, have the effect of postponing the expected moment of cadence, so that when it does arrive, it creates a powerful confirmation of A major as the subordinate key. This arrival is then reinforced by

a post-cadential *closing section* (mm. 54–59), whose initial *codetta* is another variant of the main theme's basic idea.

After a repeat of the exposition, the development section begins with yet another statement of the main theme's basic idea, still in the subordinate key of A major. Rather than being directly repeated, however, the second half of the idea is fragmented into one-bar units, which redirect the harmony to the dominant of B minor, for a sequential repetition of the entire four-bar phrase, though this time, the harmony leads to the dominant of G major.

The formal situation thus created is very unclear. On the one hand, the repetition of a new four-bar group has the potential of creating a sense of structural initiation, something like a double-sized presentation. On the other hand, the sequential harmonic context is highly unstable and thus projects from the start a sense of continuation function, though, paradoxically, there is no beginning that would precede this sense of being-in-the-middle.<sup>19</sup> What occurs in m. 68 is also curious, for the dominant of G major achieved in the previous bar is now prolonged in the manner of a post-cadential standing on the dominant. But just like what happened at the end of the transition in the exposition, there is no half cadence; rather, the music gets stuck on dominant harmony and we perceive again a dominant arrival. To summarize thus far, the form-functional situation is highly incomplete, with neither a clear structural beginning nor structural end, and thus the formal context is rendered quite loose.

Before trying to make any further sense of this complex situation, let us see what happens in the rest of the development section. The standing on the dominant we just examined leads directly to a return of main-theme materials at m. 71, which are shaped for the most part into the same sentence used for the consequent phrase of the exposition's main theme. And this music is then followed at m. 79 by the new two-bar idea that was used to begin the transition. But instead of being repeated to create a presentation, as was the earlier case, the new idea is now twice sequenced up a step. Such sequential activity strongly projects a sense of continuation function, and as we saw happening at the beginning of the development, this sequencing occurs at the very start of the thematic unit, thus by-passing a clear sense of structural initiation. Further continuational activity occurs with the half-bar fragments starting in the middle of m. 84, followed eventually by an expanded cadential progression, which

brings a decisive half cadence at m. 90 in the home key of D major. A subsequent standing on the dominant leads to a return of the main theme at m. 95 to signal the beginning of the recapitulation.

Let us step back now and consider the structure of the entire development, which may help explain and put into perspective a number of the formal anomalies we have observed. The overall section is clearly divided into three main parts: first, the very loose opening sequential passage and standing on the dominant; second, the very tight-knit sentence in G major, beginning at m. 71; and third, the continuation and cadential units starting at mm. 79 and 88 respectively. I would propose that the tight-knit sentence, itself, represents the structural initiation of the development as a whole, such that the music at m. 79 seems very much to “continue” and eventually “close” a broad formal process begun with that sentence. From this perspective, we could then see the material that precedes the sentence as a large-scale *introduction*, a “before-the-beginning” formal function. Supporting that view is the lack of structural initiation and closure that we observed, along with a general uncertainty of motion, as reflected in the constant stopping of rhythmic activity, due to the quarter-note rests throughout the passage. Indeed, William Rothstein refers to this music as having a “searching quality,” which I think captures well the introductory character projected here.<sup>20</sup> We thus see that, although the development divides itself into three main parts, these cannot automatically be labeled beginning, middle, and end; rather, the first part is better understood to function as a before-the-beginning; the second part as the actual beginning, and the third part as middle, end, and after-the-end all wrapped up together. Such an interpretation of broad-scale formal functionality does not just arise in a mechanistic way, but rather through close attention to many compositional details on the very surface of the music.<sup>21</sup>

Let us now look at the recapitulation and focus especially on the extent to which it corresponds to, or deviates from, the exposition. The recapitulation begins at m. 95 with the identical sentence found at the very opening of the movement; as there, it seems to function as an antecedent of the main theme. But instead of bringing a consequent, Mozart significantly rewrites the music at this point. This is not surprising, since he already had brought back the original consequent from the main theme within the development section (though in the wrong key of course).

In place of a consequent, Mozart writes another sentence, one that he significantly loosens by the shift to D minor, by the subsequent modulation to F major, and by the use of a dominant arrival, at m. 108, in place of a genuine half cadence. The resolution to tonic at m. 112 then initiates another sentential unit using main-theme material. The sequential continuation at m. 116 brings the music back to D minor, and the cadential progression, beginning at m. 118, leads to a half cadence two bars later. A subsequent standing on the dominant prepares the way for the return of the subordinate theme. Looking back, we can see that the shift to D minor at m. 103 marks the beginning of a *two-part transition*, each part of which is constructed as a loosely-organized sentence ending on dominant harmony.<sup>22</sup>

When the subordinate theme finally appears at m. 125, Mozart again uses main-theme materials to shape a loose sentential design. The opening four-bar presentation is followed by a continuation at m. 129, with fragmentation into one-bar units. Further fragmentation takes place in the next two bars. But they also see a broadening of the harmonic rhythm, when the pre-dominant  $\text{II}^6$  harmony is embellished by neighboring diminished-seventh chords. When the  $\text{II}^6$  holds firm in m. 133, and then progresses to the cadential six-four in the next bar, we understand that the real onset of cadential function can be traced back to m. 131, such that a fusion with the ongoing continuation occurs at that point.

The resolution of the six-four to the dominant seventh at m. 135 proposes, of course, a perfect authentic cadence. But instead of realizing genuine closure, Mozart writes a *deceptive cadence* to flat-VI. And this move sets up a delightful surprise, for after extending the submediant for two more bars, he writes yet another sentence based on the main theme. A four-bar presentation continues to prolong flat-VI, after which a continuation leads back to the cadential six-four, which is expanded for two additional bars before resolving to  $\text{V}^7$  and finally bringing the long-awaited cadence to close the subordinate theme. We see that cadential function has become enormously expanded: not only in the obvious manner projected by the prolonged dominant of mm. 144–147, but also in the way in which the final sentence, by first prolonging flat-VI of the deceptive cadence, becomes embedded within an even broader cadential area stretching back to m. 131, where that function first appears.

Following the grand cadence at m. 148, Mozart brings the same materials that he had used for the closing section of the exposition. This time, however, he actually allows the opening four bars to emerge as a genuine presentation, rather than as just a series of codettas. And to that, he adds both continuation and cadential functions to create a tight-knit sentence, the final one of the movement. What follows in m. 156 is a closing section made up exclusively of codettas built over a tonic pedal. Together, the sentence and closing section constitute the coda of the movement, a broad after-the-end function of the entire sonata form.

We have now worked through the complete movement, showing how the units at all levels of organization have specific formal functions. We have also seen that most of the thematic units of this particular piece are organized as sentences or sentence-like structures. But these sentences are not uniform blocks of the same size and internal organization that are simply strung together. Rather, each sentence is shaped in its own particular way, ranging from the most tight-knit—the main theme in the exposition—to the loosest—the final subordinate theme of the recapitulation. And I have drawn particular attention to how the specific construction of the internal functions of presentation, continuation, and cadential contributes to the functional differentiation of the sentences themselves.

Throughout the analysis, I have largely focused on harmonic and tonal contexts, on grouping processes, and on cadences. Along the way, I made practically no reference to melodies, motives, or textures in defining formal functionality. This may seem counter-intuitive, since as I discussed at the outset, most traditional theories of form rely extensively on “thematic content” as the basis for formal interpretation. But in choosing a piece with such a restricted set of ideas, I have demonstrated that form-functional differentiation easily arises even in the absence of significant melodic differentiation. Thus we were able to identify a distinct transition and subordinate theme, although both were built out of the same ideas as the main theme. Admittedly, the opening two-bar idea itself functioned most of the time as a local initiation, but in one important case, it had a very different function, namely as a medial unit within the exposition’s transition; looking back at m. 21, we can see how the sequential treatment of this idea renders its functional meaning very different from how it typically occurs within the piece. A similar reinterpretation of melodic-motivic material occurs with the “new” basic idea that opened the transi-

tion: there, in mm. 17–20, it was repeated to make a presentation phrase, a clear formal initiator. But later in the development, at m. 79, the same idea is repeated sequentially, thus projecting the sense of being very much in the middle of a thematic process.

At broader levels, especially, melodic-motivic identity does not necessarily result in form-functional identity. For example, consider the succession of sentences within the exposition compared to the recapitulation. As shown in Figure 4, there is a clear association of melodic and textural detail from each sentence in the earlier section to that in the later one, thus exemplifying well the concept of formal *rotation*, as proposed by Hepokoski and Darcy.<sup>23</sup> Yet the form-functional interpretation of these two rotations is not the same. To be sure, the opening sentence of both sections functions as a main-theme antecedent. But whereas the second sentence is the main theme's consequent in the exposition, it changes to become the first part of the transition in the recapitulation. The third sentence in the figure, which features a registral disjunction within the presentation, initially serves as the first part of the subordinate theme, but then later, as the second part of the transition. And the fourth sentence, which brings the main melodic idea in the left hand, functions in the exposition as the second part of the subordinate theme, but in the recapitulation changes to become the beginning of the entire subordinate theme.

Such non-congruence between the thematic content and the form-functional expression of that content consistently characterizes classical form. Indeed, some significant compositional disadvantages would obtain if melodic content and formal function were normally to go hand in hand and if the return of an idea always meant a return of its prior functional meaning. For it would then be either difficult to sustain a consistent formal syntax, or else the use of melodic ideas would have to be highly restricted within very specified formal positions. By functioning relatively independent of each other, however, melodic ideas and form-functional units are free to assume a wide variety of patterns. In fact, this is one of the reasons why a sense of formal “play,” as Kofi Agawu likes to put it,<sup>24</sup> especially characterizes instrumental works in this style period. Indeed, the special game that Mozart plays with the opening sentence of his Rondo can fully succeed only when the listener understands the changing formal roles assumed by the constant reappearance of the same musical ideas.



2 continuation  
model (fr. MT) sequence

25 frag. 26 27 standing on the dominant

29

33 Subordinate presentation basic idea

37 Theme (part 1) continuation

Example 1. (continued)

(part 2)  
presentation

cadential b.i. 3

42 43 45 46 47 48 49 51 52 53 56 59

V<sub>7</sub> (evaded cadence) continuation ⇄ cadential I<sup>1</sup>(EC)

IV VII<sup>7</sup>/IV V<sub>7</sub>

closing section codetta (fr. MT)

**DEVELOPMENT Part 1 ("before-the-beginning")**

model b.i. sequence

*f* *p* *f* *p*

A: I V<sub>7</sub>/II II

Example 1. (continued)

4 standing on the dominant

67

G: V1 (dominant arrival)

Part 2 ("beginning")  
presentation

71

G: I

75 continuation cadential Part 3 ("middle, end, model (fr. Trans.)

79

G: I  
PAC

80 sequence sequence frag.

85 (repeat of frag.)

88 cadential 90 std. on dom.

D: V  
III

Example 1. (continued)

91  5

**RECAPITULATION**  
Main Theme (antecedent)  
presentation

95 

continuation

99 

Transition (part one)  
presentation

103 

(modal shift)

107 continuation ⇔ standing on the dominant 

F: V<sup>7</sup> (dominant arrival)

111 (part two)  
presentation 

Example 1. (continued)

6 continuation cadential

115 116 118 D: It<sup>a</sup>

standing on the dominant

119

Subordinate Theme presentation

123 125

126

continuation ↔ cadential

129 131

132 133

II<sup>a</sup> (VII<sup>b</sup>/II) II<sup>a</sup> VC

II<sup>a</sup> (ECP) (VII<sup>b</sup>/II)

Detailed description: This musical score is for a piano and violin piece. It consists of six systems of music. The first system (measures 115-118) shows a continuation of a theme, ending with a cadential phrase. The second system (measures 119-122) is labeled 'standing on the dominant' and features a V chord. The third system (measures 123-125) is the 'Subordinate Theme presentation', starting with a rest in the piano part and a melodic line in the violin. The fourth system (measures 126-128) continues the subordinate theme with a dense texture. The fifth system (measures 129-131) shows a continuation of the theme, with a cadential phrase. The sixth system (measures 132-133) concludes the section with various chords and a final cadence. Annotations include 'continuation', 'cadential', 'standing on the dominant', 'Subordinate Theme presentation', and various Roman numerals for chords.

Example 1. (continued)

cadential (continued) 7

135 136 introduction presentation

139

continuation cadential

142 144

145 VI

147 Coda presentation 148

1) VI (deceptive cadence)

PAC

Example 1. (continued)

8

150

continuation

153

closing section

156

*p* *cresc.* *p*

1

FAC

160

*cresc.* *p*

164

*crescendo* *pp*

Example 1. (continued)

m. 1	3	23	37	45	56	65	83	109	117	123	133	
	I	: I	(V)—	I	V	V	~~~~~	V	V	~~~~~	~~~~~	~~~~~
(Introduction)	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>a'</i>	<i>g</i>	<i>h</i>	<i>i</i>	

**Figure 1: Thematic content of the exposition section of Beethoven's Symphony No. 3<sup>25</sup>**

	TIGHT-KNIT	—————>		LOOSE
tonality	home key (I)	subordinate key (V)	distant keys (iii, bVI)	modulating
harmony	prolongation of I diatonic	prolongation of I <sup>6</sup>	prolongation of V	sequential chromatic
cadence	PAC	HC	cadential evasion	no cadence
grouping structure	symmetrical (4 + 4)	(6 + 6)		asymmetrical (4 + 3 + 5)
motivic material	uniformity			diversity
thematic conventionality	period	sentence		non-conventional types

**Figure 2: Tight-knit versus loose organization**

**Figure 3. Reconstruction of mm. 25-30**

**EXPOSITION**

**Main Theme - Antecedent**

*Allegro*



**Main Theme - Consequent**



**Subordinate Theme - Part One**



**Subordinate Theme - Part Two**



The figure displays four systems of musical notation for the exposition of a piece. Each system consists of a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The first system, labeled 'Main Theme - Antecedent', begins with the tempo marking 'Allegro'. It features a melody in the treble clef with a half-note opening and a quarter-note ending, and a piano accompaniment in the bass clef consisting of a steady eighth-note pattern. The second system, 'Main Theme - Consequent', mirrors the first system. The third system, 'Subordinate Theme - Part One', introduces a new melody in the treble clef with a half-note opening and a quarter-note ending, while the piano accompaniment continues with the eighth-note pattern. The fourth system, 'Subordinate Theme - Part Two', features a more complex melody in the treble clef with sixteenth-note runs, while the piano accompaniment remains consistent with the eighth-note pattern.

**Figure 4. Thematic rotation in the exposition and recapitulation**

RECAPITULATION

Main Theme - Antecedent



Transition - Part One



Transition - Part Two



Subordinate Theme [Beginning]



The image displays four musical staves for piano, each with a title above it. The first staff, 'Main Theme - Antecedent', shows a melody in the right hand and a steady accompaniment in the left. The second, 'Transition - Part One', continues the melody and accompaniment. The third, 'Transition - Part Two', features a more active bass line with eighth-note patterns. The fourth, 'Subordinate Theme [Beginning]', begins with a rapid sixteenth-note melody in the right hand and a simple accompaniment in the left.

Figure 4. (continued)

## Notes

1. An appeal to thematic content as a major determinate of form has a long history in the theory of musical form, appearing at least as early as A. B. Marx and continuing strongly to the present, as represented, for example, by Hepokoski and Darcy's "Sonata Theory," especially in their concept of formal *rotation* (James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late-Eighteenth-Century Sonata* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).
2. Leon Plantinga, *Romantic Music* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1984), 39.
3. See William Caplin, James Hepokoski, and James Webster, *Musical Form, Forms, & Formenlehre: Three Methodological Reflections*, ed. Peter Bergé (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2009), 23–27.
4. Carl Dahlhaus, "Some Models of Unity in Musical Form," *Journal of Music Theory* 19/1 (1975): 6 [2–30].
5. Caplin, Hepokoski, and Webster, *Musical Form*, 42, 57.
6. Arnold Schoenberg, *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*, ed. Gerald Strang and Leonard Stein (London: Faber & Faber, 1967); Erwin Ratz, *Einführung in die musikalische Formenlehre*, 3rd ed., enl. (Vienna: Universal, 1973).
7. William E. Caplin, *Classical Form: A Theory of Formal Functions for the Instrumental Music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).
8. My concept of theme is thus akin to some eighteenth-century notions of *period*; see Heinrich Christoph Koch, *Versuch einer Anleitung zur Composition* (Leipzig, 1793); in the twentieth century, Leonard G. Ratner revives this earlier definition; see *Classic Music: Expression, Form, and Style* (New York: Schirmer, 1980).
9. This work has been discussed in detail by Rudolf Kelterborn, *Zum Beispiel Mozart: Ein Beitrag zur musikalischen Analyse* (Basel: Bärenreiter, 1981); Joel Galand, "Form, Genre, and Style in the Eighteenth-Century Rondo," *Music Theory Spectrum* 17 (1995): 27–52; and William Rothstein, "Playing with Forms," in *Engaging Music*, ed. Deborah Stein, 202–14 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005). The title "Rondo" is probably not by Mozart (*ibid.*, 203).
10. Kelterborn, *Zum Beispiel*, 78.
11. See Rothstein, "Playing," 203, for more details on the historical background of K. 485.
12. See Caplin, *Classical Form*, chap 3, for a more details on the structure of the sentence theme-type. In regular 8-m. sentences, the continuation and cadential functions can be said to "fuse" within a single "continuation" phrase. For the purposes of emphasizing the individual formal functions in this study, I have

indicated more specifically where the cadential function within the sentence appears, an annotation practice that departs somewhat from *Classical Form*.

13. *Ibid.*, 84–86; Caplin, Hepokoski, and Webster, *Musical Form*, 37–38.

14. Ratz, *Einführung*, 25.

15. Caplin, *Classical Form*, 79–81, 133–35.

16. “An evaded cadence arises from the failure of an implied authentic cadence to reach its goal harmony. The event appearing in place of the final tonic groups with the subsequent unit and (usually) represents the beginning of a new cadential progression” (Caplin, *Classical Form*, 54); see also Janet Schmalfeldt, “Cadential Processes: The Evaded Cadence and the ‘One More Time’ Technique,” *Journal of Musicological Research* 12 (1992): 1–51. Somewhat unusual with this evaded cadence is the return to the very start of the theme.

17. Caplin, *Classical Form*, 45–47.

18. William E. Caplin, “The ‘Expanded Cadential Progression’: A Category for the Analysis of Classical Form,” *Journal of Musicological Research* 7 (1987): 215–57.

19. For more on the idea of a thematic unit omitting an initiating unit and starting instead with continuation function, see Caplin, *Classical Form*, 111–13.

20. “Playing,” 211.

21. This development can also be analyzed in terms of the *pre-core/core* technique established in Caplin, *Classical Form*, 141–55. What I have identified here as parts 1 and 2 would thus constitute the pre-core (the first part, a *transitional introduction*, the second part, a tight-knit theme), and part 3 would be the core, whose model is, exceptionally, only two bars in length.

22. On the two-part transition, see Caplin, *Classical Form*, 135.

23. “*Elements*,” 16–19.

24. Kofi Agawu, *Playing with Signs* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991); Rothstein echoes Agawu when titling his essay on K. 485 “Playing with Forms.”

25. Leon Plantinga (1984, 39)

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